



INTERCOM



SOCIAL INVESTMENT NEWS

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*Mission - To help residents of inner cities improve
the quality of their lives to reflect individual
God-given dignity and personal achievement*

Belfast and Newark



Msgr. Linder and
Belfast Community
leaders visit
Pathmark in NCC
Shopping Center

Until recently one could safely assume that "never the twain shall meet". What could Belfast and Newark have in common?

While participating in the Vital Voices conference in Ireland in '98, Msgr. Linder discovered similarities. Belfast and Newark are close in size. The population of the Northern Ireland capital is 301,600; the population of Newark is 275,000. Both cities have long industrial histories, and shipping has played a major role in the two economies. Msgr. Linder

also noted that "unemployment in Northern Ireland is devastating". Actually, Inner East Belfast has an unemployment average of 38% with pockets as high as 72%, an extremely demoralizing situation. Newark ranks 8th in the Nation's political jurisdictions for people on welfare. Less than 40% of our young black males are employed.

Subsequently, the United States Department of Commerce (USDC) invited NCC to host a group of five community leaders from Belfast. The USDC was assisted by The American Management and Business Internship Training (AMBIT) program. AMBIT was designed to support economic growth and revitalization in Northern Ireland and the Border Countries of Ireland. The Belfast group came in March '99 "... to learn what was done in Newark, how to get sustainable economic development and how to get the community involved." They fear that unless the community works together, the peace process will break down.

During their week-long visit, the group absorbed information and ideas to develop a strategy for community economic and social regeneration. The group, comprised of representatives from both sides of the divided City of Belfast, are now working on a city-wide strategy.

The success of that visit of our Irish friends prompted the USDC to send a new group of trainees, 15 people, for two weeks in November 1999. NCC's Executive Team is presently working on the agenda which will include visits to all NCC sites and "how-to" discussions.

Of special interest to the group is partnership. Training and seminars will cover such topics as community banking and lending, public/private/business/partnerships, youth programs, workforce development, technology, modular housing, community organizing, affordable housing, Credit Union, Welfare to Work, social services, strategic planning and marketing, and other relevant subjects.

NCC looks forward to sharing the experience and expertise of 32 years of concentrated effort on behalf of the Newark "have-nots". We persevere in those efforts by focusing on Gateway-to-Work. Our mission of "improving the quality of life" cannot be realized while unemployment is rampant. Jobs bring a measure of hope and self-respect to an otherwise abject population



Youth Automotive Training Center (YATC)

Good news for one of our most successful initiatives!

The Ford Motor Company approved \$200,000 for improvements to the Center. The old Bell Atlantic car barn is getting a complete overhaul-leaking roof repaired; walls, offices, and ceilings painted; special sealant for floors; new tools and equipment; customer service waiting room (a project for our building maintenance class); upgrading of outside of building with concrete or asphalt, as well as special training for two senior instructors.

The YATC project, from its inception, was the brain child of Rich Liebler, NCC Foundation member and owner of Hillside Auto Mall. He is still involved (many hours weekly) with steadfast support and encouragement for both instructors and students.

Social Investment

Your investment will help us to help not only the have-nots in Newark; it will make it possible for us to continue to share our experiences with community leaders in urban areas nationally. Many of the problems and concerns are universal - unemployment, gender equity, bias, anti-poverty, and downright racism.

Thirty one years ago the Kerner Commission (appointed by President Johnson to investigate the nation's ethnic tensions after the riots in Newark, Los Angeles and Detroit) warned that the economic and racial divide is strong and growing.

Kerner was right. A 30 year anniversary report was published by the Milton S. Eisenhower Foundation in 1998. The report stated that "While leaders and pundits talk of full employment, inner city unemployment is at crisis levels. The rich are getting richer, the poor are getting poorer, and minorities are suffering disproportionately"

Some statistics in support of this finding

- * National unemployment is below 5%
- * Unemployment for young African - American men has topped 30%
- * U.S. incarceration of black men is four times higher than the same rate in South Africa under apartheid
- * U.S. child poverty rate is four times the average of Western European countries.

Please support NCC so that we may continue to support those who reach out to us.

N.B. The return on your investment is 8%

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Martha Richards

From 1986 to the present, Martha Richards has been a mainstay in St. Rose School. After many years as the First Grade teacher, Martha is now the Reading Coordinator. She works with individuals as well as small groups of children. Martha also works with teachers. She is determined that every child will read, regardless of handicap - including dyslexia.

Martha was born in Shellman, Georgia and reared from infancy in Newark. She attended Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, completing a BA in Psychology and Child Development. Martha also did graduate work in Banking. She is still involved with her Alma Mater which was the first Black college to receive a Phi Beta Kappa Chapter. Tiffany Marshall is Martha's 22 year old daughter who is a senior at Morgan State University in Baltimore. She graduated from Immaculate Conception High School in Montclair. Tiffany's major is in Communications but her Music minor is just as important. She is a member of the school choir which has toured Europe and performed at Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall. Martha is a mighty proud mom.

One of the many hats worn by Mrs. Richards is that of Co-Chair of the Steering Committee for the Middle States Self-Evaluation. Also, she was part of a panel chosen by the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA, '99) for St. Rose's presentation: Staff Development Process for Improving Teaching of Basic Skills. The program includes teacher training which is primarily through supervised practice in a multisensory structured language approach.

Intolerance in any form is anathema to Martha. She has a special fondness for and patience with children with reading difficulties. Annually, she updates her skills and knowledge in her chosen field. In her spare time, Martha admits that she gets lost in good reading and classical music - particularly Handel.

St. Rose staff and children are the happy recipients of the friendship and services of a very caring woman.

